



# Report from

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12/15/60

URBAN LEAGUE OF ESSEX COUNTY

58 Jones Street, Newark 3, N. J.

MA 2-5331

A RED FEATHER AGENCY

A. THIS REPORT

This report is intended to highlight, for members and friends of our Agency, its goals, activities, and accomplishments during 1960. It omits routine operations. Detailed operating procedures are contained in the departmental reports of the Agency and are available to any responsible person who may wish to review them.

B. SUMMARY

During its 1960 operations, the Urban League of Essex County in carrying out its primary objectives of improving the living and working conditions of minority group citizens has:

Initiated, on a continuing basis, new working relationships with three Federal agencies.

Contributed approximately 200 man hours of staff time in filling requests from two state and three municipal agencies.

Provided information, data, and staff participation to three private organizations concerned with current community problems of social import and significance.

Established and serviced the Essex County Homefinding Committee which developed an index of 50 prospective adoptive and foster care homes for Negro children now residing in public and private institutions.

Interviewed, counseled, and referred to the proper social agency 135 individuals confronted with economic, family, and/or personal problems.

Registered 533 Negro workers seeking the service of the League in finding employment.

Referred 144 job applicants to job openings developed through the employers relations activities of the League's Industrial Relations Department.

Placed 77 applicants in jobs of which 30 were positions in which Negro workers in this area were hired for the first time.

Conducted a wide variety of fact finding and informal education activities in the fields of housing in efforts to increase the amount of decent housing in Essex County available to non-whites.

Prepared 12 pieces of program literature and distributed more than 50,000 copies of such materials in program operations during the year.

## I. PLANNING AND POLICY ACTIVITIES

The Urban League is basically a planning Agency. Its overall goals are (1) planning for a better community, and (2) so organizing and utilizing the resources of the community as to improve the total community by improving the living and working conditions of the community's minority group citizens.

To achieve this end, the Urban League during 1960 has developed and/or maintained a high policy close working relationship with a number of public and private agencies and organizations.

Among such agencies and organizations during the current year were The 1960 White House Conference on Children and Youth. The Executive Director of the League served on committees at the state level and participated in the drafting of the findings of the Conference in Washington.

Other agencies and organizations with which the League worked closely included (1) The Newark Commission on Neighborhood Conservation and Rehabilitation (2) The State Department of Labor and Industry (3) The Newark Council of Social Agencies (4) The New Jersey Advisory Committee to the United States Civil Rights Commission (5) The New Jersey Welfare Council (6) Narcotics Bureau, United States Treasury Department (7) New Jersey Division on Civil Rights (8) State Department of Conservation and Economic Development (9) State Board of Child Welfare (10) The Newark Housing Authority, and (11) The Housing Authority of the City of East Orange.

## II. COMMUNITY SERVICES DEPARTMENT

The Community Services Department of the Agency undertook three major projects during the year. These were (1) Adoption (2) Neighborhood Improvement, and (3) Urbanizing the Negro Community.

Our Adoption (Homefinding) Project was centered around finding adoptive and foster care homes for some 500 Negro children currently residing in public and private institutions.

During the year the League, in carrying out this project, organized an Essex County Citizens Homefinding Committee of 30 representative residents with Mrs. Thomas W. Edwards of Glen Ridge as chairman.

In order to function effectively, subcommittees were appointed as follows: Promotion and Publicity, Mrs. Laura Hayling . . . Speaker's Bureau, Dr. Arthur C. Thornhill . . . Church Contacts, Rev. John W. Collier . . . Community Organization Contacts, Dr. W. L. Hawkins . . . Information Center, Mrs. George S. Parlin . . . Finance, Mr. Gabriel Rich.

To date the Citizen's Homefinding Committee, serviced by our Community Organization Secretary, has developed an index of 50 prospective adoptive and foster care homes. Each of these prospective homes has been referred to an appropriate child care agency for pro-

cessing. Each case of adoption or foster care placement will be reported to the League immediately upon completion.

In carrying out this project the various committees have succeeded in obtaining 500 spaces for car cards in Public Service buses and cars . . . secured three radio broadcasts and one telecast over stations in New York and New Jersey . . . prepared a resource manual on adoption, and published and distributed more than 2,000 copies of an adoption brochure . . . had published seven news stories about the project and appeared before nine groups and/or organizations to provide information about the project and to stimulate public support for it.

The purpose of the Agency's Neighborhood Improvement Program is to assist neighborhood groups and organizations in making their neighborhoods more attractive and to improve health and safety conditions through united efforts.

To date the Agency has organized new neighborhood councils in Peshine Avenue and 13th Street in Newark. It has continued to service four affiliated groups and has served as consultants to neighborhood groups in East Orange and Montclair. Total regular membership of these groups constitutes about 150 in Newark and about 95 in East Orange and Montclair.

In addition, the Community Organization Secretary of the Agency has provided the Newark Commission on Neighborhood Conservation and Rehabilitation with more than 53 man hours of service in making a socio-economic survey on the Clinton Hill Urban Redevelopment Project, while the Executive Director of the League, on appointment by the Mayor, has contributed over 60 man hours of service to NCNCR to date as a Commissioner and a member of its Executive Committee.

Because of the tremendous increase of the Negro population in Newark during the past decade (75,000 to 150,000), our program for urbanizing the Negro community was undertaken. Present operations are centered around the Stella Windsor Wright Homes (a public housing project built to accommodate 7,000 residents) and the immediately adjacent neighborhood.

To date the Agency, working with the assistance of the Newark Housing Authority (particularly the Manager of the Stella Windsor Wright Homes) has established a tenant's association at the project as a vehicle for reaching the people in that area.

The present active membership of this association is currently 226. To date twelve meetings have been held by the group. Six of these meetings were workshop type sessions concerned with problems in homemaking. Volunteer group leaders from the following sources have been utilized: Home Decorating Department of Bamberger's and Mahne & Co. . . . Home Economics Department of the Red Cross and Public Service Electric and Gas Company . . .

More than 5,000 copies of a brochure, prepared by the Agency, on the Stella Windsor Wright Urbanizing Program, have been put into circulation by the League.

### III. INDUSTRIAL RELATIONS DEPARTMENT

The industrial relations activities of the League during 1960 have been directed towards securing wider job opportunities for Negro workers and to assist Negro workers and youth in preparing for such opportunities.

To date the Industrial Relations Department of the Agency has developed 144 new job opportunities and has placed 77 Negro workers in jobs.

During the current year the Agency registered 533 workers and made 168 referrals to employment opportunities developed through League activities.

In its job development activities the League (1) prepared and distributed 500 copies of an Information Bulletin for Employers (2) Conducted a luncheon and workshop in celebration of Equal Opportunity Day (November 18) which was attended by 147 persons representing 26 major business and industrial concerns in our area and 11 labor unions and other agencies and organizations.

Vocational counseling and job information activities conducted by the League in 1960 included (1) a Career Conference at the Newark College of Engineering, (2) a Vocational Institute at the Monumental Baptist Church in Jersey City and (3) individual job counseling to more than 647 Negro workers and/or job applicants.

Among the significant placements made in this area by the League this year were (1) five Narcotics Agents with the Bureau of Narcotics, Department of the Treasury, (2) the first area salesman for the Brown and Williamson Tobacco Company, (3) the first non-white secretary with the American Federation of Musicians, (4) the first Negro salesman with the Birdseye Frozen Foods Company, (5) the first Negro demonstrators for the Gordon Baking Company, (6) more than twenty professional and clerical workers with the New Jersey Department of Labor and Industry and one underwriter with the New York Life Insurance Company.

### IV. HOUSING OPERATIONS

One of the greatest needs, if not the greatest, of the Negro population in our area is safe, decent, and sanitary housing, particularly in the middle income bracket (\$25.00 to \$28.00 per room).

As a part of its on-going program of improving the living and working conditions of the Negro population, the League must concern itself with this basic need.

Because of racial discrimination in housing, Negroes are limited as to where they may live; what kind of housing they can obtain;

and are more often than not forced to pay premium prices for either rental or owner occupied facilities.

In its efforts to combat these conditions, the Executive of the League during 1960 has held conferences with city officials, housing developers, and other interested parties in an effort to increase the local housing supply available to non-whites.

Two recent meetings with city officials, representatives of other agencies, and the Middle Income Housing Corporation of New York City, have resulted in initial proposals for a 400 unit non-segregated cooperative housing development in Newark. A detailed report of this proposal will be made to the League's Housing Committee by the beginning of the year.

Also during the year the League has conducted, in cooperation with the local housing authority, a conference on housing needs and problems of relocation in the city of East Orange.

Other housing activities of the League during the year included the appointment of the Executive Director to the Citizen's Advisory Committee of the State Department of Conservation and Economic Development . . . service as a commissioner on the Newark Commission on Neighborhood Conservation and Rehabilitation . . . and fact-finding operations by the Executive on relocation problems of Negroes now residing on sites marked for urban renewal.

#### V. ADMINISTRATIVE DEPARTMENT

At the beginning of the current fiscal year, the Board of Directors of the Urban League decided upon three major areas of emphasis for the year. These areas were (1) broadening the base of public participation in the Agency's program (2) increasing financial support from the community, and (3) the utilizing of the services and resources of the Agency to wider advantage in community problems.

With respect to its first area of emphasis, the Membership Committee of the Agency set its goal for 1500 members in 1960. The 1959 membership was approximately 650. To date the current membership of the Agency is approximately 800.

In addition to the increase in dues-paying membership, the Agency has succeeded during the year in substantially increasing participation in the Agency's program primarily through the establishment of the Stella Windsor Wright Homes Project; the activities of the Citizens Homefinding Committee; the housing activities of the administrative department, and a broadening of the Agency's neighborhood improvement operations.

In its efforts to further the second area of emphasis, the Agency succeeded in securing two \$1,000.00 foundation grants and \$5,000.00 from individual gifts and membership dues. This total of \$7,000.87 is the highest total from dues and contributions to the Agency within the last five years.

With respect to the third area of emphasis of the Agency for its 1960 program, the following activities and projects are of significance:

The Administrative Department gathered the necessary information and data on discriminatory practices in apprenticeships in New Jersey and presented the findings before the New Jersey Advisory Committee of the Federal Civil Rights Commission, of which Senator Waddington of Salem County is the chairman.

Early during the year the Administrative Department of the Agency prepared a ten-point memorandum on Problems Affecting Negro Workers in New Jersey and made a presentation of these findings to Commissioner Raymond Male of the State Department of Labor and Industry. This memorandum has formed a basis for a continuing monthly conference between the Department of Labor and the State Council of Urban Leagues as a vehicle for implementing the recommendations made by the Executive Director.

When the Commissioner of Labor proposed a new minimum wage order for beauticians, the Administrative Department of the League gathered the necessary facts and prepared a supporting memorandum to the issuance of this wage order and presented this memorandum to the Commissioner through the State Council of Urban Leagues.

Other activities of the Administrative Department included work with order agencies and organizations in the fields of housing, child care, and urban redevelopment.

The Agency, during the year, devoted substantial staff time and effort to the activities of the Urban League Guild in the carrying out of its various programs and its November 13th Fund Raising Activity (Jazz Festival) at the Mosque Theater in Newark.

All of these specialized activities were in addition to administrative responsibilities in carrying out the directives of the Board and the day-to-day operations of the League.

During 1961, however, a substantially increased budget will be necessary if the League is to even maintain its operations at the 1960 level.